

Message Text

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ACTION TRSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 NEA-10 IO-13 H-01 L-03 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 AID-05 EB-08 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04
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USADB

FOR NAC AGENCIES

BANGKOK FOR RED

E O 11652: ADS, DECLAS 6/9/77
TAGS: EAID, EFIN
SUBJ: PROPOSED ADB TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA) GRANT TO THE
INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

SUMMARY. ADB MANAGEMENT PROPOSED \$500,000 TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE(TA) GRANT TO THE INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH
INSTITUTE (IRRI) TO FINANCE THE PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT FOR
THE RICE GENETIC RESEARCH LABORATORY NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION.
CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL REAEARCH
(CGIAR) IS FINANCING CONSTRUCTION COST OF LABORATORY
ITSELF. USADB SUPPORTS PROPOSAL AND RECOMMENDS FAVORABLE
NAC ACTION.

1. ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
(IRRI) HAVE CONTINUED TO EXPAND RAPIDLY. PROCEEDING FROM
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ITS EARLY SUCCESSES WITH IR-8, WHICH YIELDED TWO OR THREE
TIMES AS MUCH AS CONVENTIAL RICE VARIETIES, AND IR-20
WHICH, IN ADDITION TO BETTER YIELDS, HAD BETTER
EATING QUALITY AND REMARKABLE RESISTANCE TO CERTAIN
INSECT PESTS AND DISEASES, IRRI HAS DEVELOPED AND DIS-
TRIBUTED A STREAM OF VARIETIES WHICH ARE RESISTANT TO
STILL WIDER RANGE OF PESTS AND DISEASES. RECENTLY, AS

IRRIGATION COSTS HAVE MOUNTED AND SMALL-SCALE FARMERS ESPECIALLY HAVE ENCOUNTERED DIFFICULTIES IN APPLYING NECESSARY PLANT PROTECTION MEASURES, IRRI HAS FOCUSED INCREASINGLY ON THE 75 PERCENT OF ASIA'S RICE LANDS THAT ARE UNIRRIGATED. ACCORDINGLY, THERE IS GREAT AND GROWING NEED FOR NEW RICE TYPES CAPABLE OF THRIVING UNDER WIDE VARIETY OF ADVERSE CONDITIONS.

2. CORE OF IRRI'S RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORT IS ITS GENETIC EVALUATION AND UTILIZATION (GEU) PROGRAM. GEU, WHICH ACCOUNTED FOR 34 PERCENT OF TOTAL IRRI EXPENDITURES IN 1976, CONSISTS OF THREE COMPONENTS WITH OVERLAPPING ACTIVITIES:

(I) GERM PLASM BANK (GB), WHICH RECEIVES SAMPLES OF RICE GERM PLASM FROM THROUGHOUT WORLD AND, IN TURN, DISSEMINATES SEEDS TO COUNTRY PROGRAMS AND PROVIDES MATERIAL FOR RICE EVALUATION AND BREEDING PROGRAM (REB). GB NOW HAS 38,000 ACCESSIONS AND HAS SUPPLIED 45,000 PACKETS OF SEED TO RICE RESEARCHERS;

(II) REB, WHICH IDENTIFIES AND EVALUATES STRAINS THAT ARE RESISTANT TO ENVIRONMENTAL STRESSES THAT LIMIT RICE PRODUCTION;

(III) INTERNATIONAL RICE TESTING PROGRAM (IRTP), WHICH FACILITATES THE FLOW OF GENETIC MATERIAL FROM IRRI TO NATIONAL PROGRAMS AS WELL AS BETWEEN NATIONAL PROGRAMS.

3. IN A RECENT HIGHLY FAVORABLE REVIEW OF IRRI LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ACTIVITIES BY EIGHT SCIENTISTS APPOINTED BY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH (CGIAR), PROVISION OF A RICE GERM PLASM STORAGE AND LABORATORY FACILITY WAS IDENTIFIED AS MOST CRITICAL OF FIVE PRIORITY IRRI NEEDS. GEU PROGRAM HAS OUTGROWN PRESENT FACILITIES, LET ALONE SPACE NEEDED FOR FUTURE EXPANSION. IN PARTICULAR, IRRI LACKS LONG-TERM FACILITIES FOR STORING SEEDS AT SUB-FREEZING TEMPERATURES. THIS NECESSITATES FREQUENT SEED REJUVENATION WHICH LEADS TO IDENTIFICATION ERRORS, MIXTURES, AND CHANGES IN GENETIC COMPOSITION.

4. NEW FACILITY WILL INCLUDE AN EFFICIENT SYSTEM FOR THREE MAJOR FUNCTIONS OF GEU PROGRAM: STORAGE, PROCESSING, AND PRESERVATION OF SEEDS. OTHER ESSENTIAL SERVICE UNITS TO BE CONNECTED TO SEED LABORATORY ARE MILLING AND QUALITY LABORATORIES, AND OFFICES AND LABORATORIES FOR STAFF. PLANS HAVE BEEN DRAWN BY QUALIFIED ARCHITECTS IN CONSULTATION WITH EXPATRIATE CONSULTING ENGINEERS, REVIEWED

AND APPROVED BY RICE GENETIC RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JOINTLY SPONSORED BY IRRI AND INTERNATIONAL BOARD FOR
PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES UNDER AEGIS OF CGIAR.

5. TOTAL COST OF PROPOSED LABORATORY IS \$2.1 MILLION,
OF WHICH \$1.6 MILLION FOR BUILDING COSTS AND \$500,000
FOR LABORATORY EQUIPMENT. CGIAR HAS ALREADY PROVIDED
\$500,000 OF BUILDING COSTS, ON BASIS OF WHICH CON-
STRUCTION WAS STARTED LATE IN 1976. IRRI IS ASSURED
THAT CGIAR WILL MAKE AVAILABLE REMAINING \$1.1 MILLION
OF BUILDING COSTS IN 1977. BANK HAS BEEN ASKED TO
FINANCE PROCUREMENT OF LABORATORY EQUIPMENT. OF
LABORATORY ITEMS TALLING \$500,000, MAJOR ITEMS ARE
PREFABRICATED COLD STORAGE ROOMS (\$117,000); COMPRESSORS,
EVAPORATORS, AND TOWERS (\$102,000); ADJUSTABLE METAL
SHELVES (\$66,000); AND EMERGENCY GENERATORS (\$60,000).

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6. PROCUREMENT WOULD BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL
SHOPPING GUIDELINES, EXCEPT FOR MINOR ITEMS WHICH WOULD
HAVE TO BE MATCHED TO EXISTING EQUIPMENT AND FOR WHICH
DIRECT ORDERS WILL BE PLACED.

7. PROPOSED TA IS BANK'S SECOND TO IRRI. FIRST, A
\$300,000 TA GRANT IN FEB. 1975 FOR EXPANDING LABORATORY
AND TRAINING FACILITIES, WAS FULLY AND EXPEDITIOUSLY
UTILIZED. THIS GRANT WOULD MARKEDLY INCREASE IRRI'S
CAPACITY TO CONSERVE VALUABLE RICE GERM PLASM FOR FUTURE
USE AND HELP FARMERS TO PRODUCE RICE UNDER WIDE VARIETY
OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS. USADB SUPPORTS PROPOSALS
AND RECOMMENDS FAVORABLE NAC ACTION.
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